

# **EXHIBIT**

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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR  
THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA**

STUDENTS FOR FAIR ADMISSIONS,  
INC,

Plaintiff,

v.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH  
CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL, et al.,

Defendants.

Civil Action No. 1:14-cv-954-LCB-JLW

**DECLARATION OF LUIS ACOSTA**

Luis Acosta, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, declares the following:

1. My name is Luis Acosta, I am over 18 years of age, and I am fully competent to make this declaration.
2. I am a full-time undergraduate student at UNC-Chapel Hill. I am a rising junior and am pursuing majors in Chemistry and Global Studies.
3. I am Hispanic.
4. I chose to attend UNC-Chapel Hill because it is known as a prestigious public institution and has a great Pre-Med program. I knew that it would be a big change for me. I wanted to move farther from home and to be able to meet a diverse group of people. At UNC-Chapel Hill I have been able to do just that. I also received a lot of

financial assistance from UNC-Chapel Hill, which was an important factor in my decision to attend UNC-Chapel Hill.

5. I believe my background enables me to offer unique perspectives and cultural experiences in my academic and campus activities. Almost all of my family lives outside of the United States, which sets me apart from many of my peers. I am the first member of my family to attend college, and I did not grow up with English as my first language. My parents are very supportive, but they could not give me advice on picking a college or help me navigate the admissions process like the parents of many other UNC-Chapel Hill students. I have had to figure a lot out on my own. I am also at a disadvantage financially compared to most of my peers. I came from a high school that was primarily white and I was one of two minority students in my graduating class to attend UNC-Chapel Hill. We were the only minority students in our class to attend a top-tier university. Growing up speaking Spanish and without many resources from my parents has made me a lot more independent, and other students have asked me about my journey. Sharing my experiences with other UNC students has allowed them to see and understand a different perspective of life. I like being able to share my culture with people who are different from me.

6. I believe the benefits of racial and ethnic diversity play an important role in a number of academic and campus activities that affect my undergraduate experience, including lectures, seminars, residential life, student government, communities of faith, extracurricular activities, and community service programs. In particular, I have been

involved with the Mezcla Spanish Magazine Committee, the Scholars' Latino Initiative, Student Action with Farmworkers, the Rural Health Group, the Pielak Chemistry Lab, and several tutoring and mentoring programs. I am a mentor and volunteer at the Boys and Girls Club of Henderson County, McDougle Middle School, and Frank Porter Graham Elementary Bilingual School. During my Freshman year, I was also a mentor and volunteer at Helping Youth by Providing Enrichment. These activities benefit enormously from racial and ethnic diversity and by the membership of people from different backgrounds.

7. I currently experience academic and personal benefits from UNC-Chapel Hill's racially diverse student body. It has been fascinating learning about the different cultures here and how some are so related to mine. I have enjoyed being able to hear all the stories of ethnically diverse students and I also enjoy being in a different setting than where I grew up. Back home I felt a lot more ethnic tension. I often felt uncomfortable and sometimes encountered really ugly situations or comments. I would feel like I did not belong in my Honors and AP classes, but at UNC-Chapel Hill I do not have that problem. The environment here is different and better because when I interact with others, I see a pool of all different colored faces instead of a sea of white faces like back home. I feel like I belong at UNC-Chapel Hill.

8. I believe my education would be harmed if UNC-Chapel Hill stopped considering race in its admission decisions. The current policy facilitates the admission of strong Hispanic students, which improves my educational experience by allowing me

to learn alongside a greater number of Hispanic students so that I do not feel singled out as a spokesperson for my race/ethnicity. The policy likewise facilitates the admission of underrepresented minority students from racial or ethnic backgrounds different from my own and from whom I feel I learn both inside and outside the classroom. For example, I have been able to spend time with some Indian and Asian students at UNC-Chapel Hill from whom I have learned a lot and who broke down a lot of the stereotypes I held about people of their ethnic background. A diversity of perspectives allows me to learn about cultures different from my own, but has also helped me realize that everyone has a lot more in common than one would first think. I have been able to learn a lot academically from other students and have been able to grow as a student because of the diversity I see every day.

9. I want to learn and live alongside students who are each a part of a critical mass of their race/ethnicity. To facilitate that, I would like to see an increase in the number and diversity of underrepresented racial groups admitted to UNC-Chapel Hill. I felt isolated as a Latino in my hometown, and while this campus is far more diverse than where I came from, it never hurts to enroll more diverse and qualified students.

10. I feel very comfortable around the students at UNC-Chapel Hill, but sometimes students can be unfair or insensitive to each other when an issue involving race or ethnicity comes up on campus. For example, I talk to a lot my peers about getting more support for undocumented students. A lot of people do not agree with me that these students have a right to education, and that if they get to UNC-Chapel Hill, they should

pay in-state tuition, especially when they have lived in North Carolina most of their lives. A lot of students do not understand the struggle that undocumented and Latino students face in attaining education. Some of my peers can be very stubborn when it comes to these issues. I have also overheard students make mean comments toward fellow peers who protest campus policies that they believe to be racially insensitive. I would like students to listen to each other and learn from each other when it comes to issues of race and ethnicity. Putting everyone together brings the best out in everyone.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed  
this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of June, 2015.

Luis Acosta

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